

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 14

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY SENATOR BEGICH

Introduced: 4/14/21

Referred: Transportation, Labor & Commerce

A RESOLUTION

1 **Urging the United States Congress to reintroduce and pass legislation to establish a**
2 **national infrastructure bank as was provided by H.R. 6422 from the 116th United States**
3 **Congress to help finance urgently needed infrastructure projects across the nation.**

4 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

5 **WHEREAS** the American Society of Civil Engineers, in its 2021 Report Card for
6 America's Infrastructure, gave the United States a grade of C- for the current state of the
7 nation's infrastructure; and

8 **WHEREAS** the 2021 Report Card estimates the cumulative total cost of restoring the
9 nation's infrastructure to a state of good repair between 2020 and 2029 to be
10 \$5,937,000,000,000; and

11 **WHEREAS** only \$3,350,000,000,000 of that total cost is funded, and the total
12 investment gap has risen to \$2,590,000,000,000 over 10 years from 2020 to 2029; and

13 **WHEREAS**, if the United States continues to fund infrastructure projects at its current
14 rate of underinvestment, over the next 20 years, the nation stands to lose \$10,000,000,000,000
15 in gross domestic product, over 3,000,000 jobs, and \$2,400,000,000,000 in exports; and

1 **WHEREAS**, by 2039, the overdue infrastructure bill of the United States will cost the
2 average household in the United States \$3,300 a year, or \$63 a week; and

3 **WHEREAS**, in addition to the funding needed to restore the nation's existing
4 infrastructure to a state of good repair, investment is needed to meet the infrastructure
5 demands of the 21st century; and

6 **WHEREAS**, according to the American Society of Civil Engineers' 2021 Report
7 Card, the state received a grade of C- when last reviewed by ASCE in 2017; and

8 **WHEREAS** 31 of over 280 rural communities in the state do not have centralized
9 water or wastewater systems, requiring residents to haul water and ice from rivers and lakes
10 and use outhouses, "honey buckets," and sewage lagoons for disposal of solid waste; and

11 **WHEREAS** the cost of installing and repairing water and wastewater systems in the
12 state is estimated to be \$1,500,000,000; and

13 **WHEREAS** the Port of Anchorage, which receives 85 percent of all consumer goods
14 entering the state, lacks funding needed for an essential modernization project; and

15 **WHEREAS** the inability of the state to finance a deep water port in the Arctic will
16 deprive the state's economy of the coming benefits of expanded northern trade routes and
17 development in the region; and

18 **WHEREAS** the state lacks sufficient infrastructure to house its residents, with the
19 official estimate by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development of
20 persons experiencing housing insecurity in the state reaching 1,949 in 2020, including 1,725
21 persons living in shelters and 224 living outdoors at that time; and

22 **WHEREAS**, according to the Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness, in
23 January 2020, the official number of persons experiencing homelessness in Anchorage was
24 1,058, including 1,003 persons living in shelters and 55 living outdoors at that time; and

25 **WHEREAS** Anchorage is currently in need of 1,695 more housing units for rapid
26 rehousing and 700 housing units for permanent supportive housing; and

27 **WHEREAS**, in 2019, approximately 7,900 people in Anchorage sought some form of
28 assistance because of homelessness, up from 7,763 in the previous year; and

29 **WHEREAS** a new national infrastructure bank, working in partnership with state and
30 local governments, could finance many of the projects needed in the state, including
31 infrastructure for broadband transmission, affordable housing units, railroad facilities, and

1 other construction and road repairs; and

2 **WHEREAS** new infrastructure projects would employ many Alaskans who have lost
3 jobs as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic; and

4 **WHEREAS** H.R. 6422, the National Infrastructure Bank Act of 2020, was introduced
5 in the 116th United States Congress to create a new national infrastructure bank; and

6 **WHEREAS** H.R. 6422 would have created a \$4,000,000,000,000 bank dedicated to
7 investments in infrastructure projects; and

8 **WHEREAS** the new national infrastructure bank in H.R. 6422 was modeled on
9 previous banks that helped build much of the nation's infrastructure under President George
10 Washington, President James Madison, President Abraham Lincoln, and President Franklin
11 D. Roosevelt; and

12 **WHEREAS** the last national infrastructure bank helped bring the nation out of the
13 Great Depression and win World War II; and

14 **WHEREAS**, by repurposing existing debt of the United States Department of the
15 Treasury, as has been done previously in United States history, the new national infrastructure
16 bank would be capitalized without new federal spending; and

17 **WHEREAS** the new national infrastructure bank would create 25,000,000 new jobs,
18 pay wages under 40 U.S.C. 3141 - 3144, 3146, and 3147 (Davis-Bacon Act, as amended), and
19 require compliance with project labor agreements; and

20 **WHEREAS** H.R. 6422 required iron, steel, cement, and manufactured products used
21 in projects funded by the new national infrastructure bank to be produced in the United States;
22 and

23 **WHEREAS** H.R. 6422 authorized subsidy programs for infrastructure projects for
24 underrepresented communities, which would increase employment in those communities, and
25 authorized project targeting for economically disadvantaged business enterprises; and

26 **WHEREAS**, like its predecessor national infrastructure banks, a new national
27 infrastructure bank is predicted to grow the nation's economy by four to five percent each
28 year; and

29 **WHEREAS** the cost of addressing the nation's infrastructure needs increases every
30 day Congress fails to act; and

31 **WHEREAS** legislation in support of H.R. 6422 was introduced in 17 states, including

1 Alabama, Illinois, New Mexico, Ohio, Rhode Island, and South Carolina; and

2 **WHEREAS** H.R. 6422 was supported by many organizations, including the National
3 Congress of Black Women, Inc., the National Association of Counties, the United States High
4 Speed Rail Association, the National Latino Farmers and Ranchers Trade Association, the
5 American Sustainable Business Council, the National Association of Minority Contractors,
6 the National Federation of Federal Employees, the American Federation of Labor and
7 Industrial Organizations of the State of Virginia, and the Georgia State Council of Machinists;
8 and

9 **WHEREAS** the Biden Administration has recently introduced a plan to fund up to
10 \$4,000,000,000,000 of infrastructure projects nationwide;

11 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature hereby urges the 117th United
12 States Congress to reintroduce and pass legislation to establish a national infrastructure bank
13 as provided by H.R. 6422 in the 116th United States Congress to help finance urgently needed
14 infrastructure projects across the nation.

15 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, President
16 of the United States; the Honorable Kamala D. Harris, Vice President of the United States and
17 President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the U.S. House of
18 Representatives; the Honorable Patrick Leahy, President pro tempore of the U.S. Senate; the
19 Honorable Pete Buttigieg, United States Secretary of Transportation; and the Honorable Lisa
20 Murkowski and the Honorable Dan Sullivan, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young,
21 U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.